

keep an eye on those manly games of " shooting
 " or fight-
 ing ", especially if the smaller children were
 taking part with
 the bigger ones, lest the play should suddenly
 become at
 least half-earnest, and the little ones suffer. If
 the con-
 testants were equally matched, it was safer to
 leave them
 alone. On the other hand, it was very often
 possible to
 turn at any rate a half-quarrel into a joke,
 and laughter
 was always the best solvent for hatred.

It is interesting to see how large the
 playful threat of
biting looms in the make-believe aggression.
 That is to say,
 it lasts as a mode of pretending to be hostile,
 of " teasing/"
 long after it is given up as a characteristic
 form of real
 behaviour. (Note Frank, for instance, on p.
 46, "I only
 meant to tease/")

Make-believe aggression does sometimes
 happen to be used
 as a first response to a real stimulus, if the
 provocation is
 not very great. One child might threaten to
 do something
 to another, half-jokingly, and perhaps keep
 his manner
 playful as long as the watchful eye of an
 adult was on
 him—but pass over into a real attack if he
 thought himself
 unobserved, or if the playful threat did not
 immediately gain
 his end.

A good deal of teasing is included under *real*
 aggression,
 since it was felt to be real enough by the
 sufferer, even though
 the aggressor could truly say, " I wasn't *doing*
 anything to
 him—I was only saying ' pop'/" Little
 children do not
 believe that " hard words break no bones ".
 They are quite
 well aware of the hostile intention behind the
 mere words,
 and react to that with true understanding.
 The attitude of
 the teasing child frightens them, since they
 know how easily
 it slips over into hostile action, and have little
 reason to
 trust the other child not to *behave* so if *he feels*
 so.

A more exact classification would thus have to
 do its work
 twice over—once from the point of view of the
 teaser, and once
 from that of the sufferer. And the dates of the
 incidents
 placed in the latter group would be much later
 than those of
 the former. A child can say, " I only *meant* to
 tease " long
 before he can believe that the other child " is
 only teasing",
 or can show the delicious sense of Dan when he
 replied to the
 others' threats about " making Dan " and "
 putting him
 in " somewhere where " robbers will steal his
 things": "Oh,
 it will only be a plasticine Dan ! " (P. 83.)